

Colored Soldiers Again Show Prowess

In the Philippines. The Fight at Las Pinas.

Full reports from the Philippines show that the recent Filipino attack on Las Pinas was a well-directed movement, and that nothing but the good judgment of Negro officers and the coolness and courage of Negro troopers prevented its success.

The town of Las Pinas is garrisoned by Company B, 49th Infantry (Captain W. R. Staff) and by Company G 49th Infantry (Captain F. R. Steward) the garrison being under the command of Capt. Steward. The forces of the enemy lay in the rice paddies east and south of the town and were massed in position opposite the company's quarters and the post guard-house. About 1:30 a. m. the enemy began the attack by firing on the patrol which had just posted the one o'clock relief and which



CAPT. FRANK R. STEWARD,

49th U. S. Vol. Inf. of Cambridge, Mass., now serving in the Philippines, is a graduate of Harvard University, and enlisted in the 8th U. S. Vol. Inf. in the Spanish-American War, was promoted to First Sergeant and Second Lieutenant and commissioned as Captain by the President.

was then proceeding along the east road of the town in the rear of G. Company's quarters. The patrol immediately deployed and returned fire. Thereupon the enemy opened fire on B Company's quarters.

By this time both companies had got into line. Captain Steward, commanding Co. G, at once joined the patrol in returning fire. Captain Staff, commanding Co. B, left a part of his company in the rear of his quarters to reply to the enemy's fire at that point and took position with the rest of his company near the guard house. Lieut. Charles Spurlock, the officer of the day, deployed the guard across the north road about fifty yards from the guard house. The enemy's fire was now general from all his positions and the whole garrison was vigorously responding to it. After a half hour's fighting the enemy ceased firing.

Four more attempts to enter the town were made by the insurgents at various hours during the early morning but each time without success. The last attempt was at 7 a. m. when the rebels tried to effect an entrance by the north road while keeping up their fire on the east of the town. They were promptly driven off by Lieut. Spurlock; and thereupon all the forces of the enemy withdrew and the attack ceased.

The night was intensely dark but the scene of the attack was now and then illuminated by the search-light of the war vessels drawn there by the firing.

This service of the navy was much appreciated. Just before the insurgents made their second attempt to enter Las Pinas the sound of firing was heard from the outpost at Zapote Bridge, which outpost consist of forty men of the 49th under the command of Lieut. Guildford E. Campbell, 49th Infantry, and is situated about two miles south of Las Pinas. Later, word was received by the telephone that Zapote Bridge was being attacked, and Capt. Steward at once despatched Lieut. William Blaney, with re-enforcements for the outpost. Lieut. Blaney and his detachment while en route to Zapote Bridge were exposed to a hot fire from a force of the enemy in an entrenched position near the Zapote River. This force had been placed there for the purpose of cutting off the outpost from re-enforcement. Lieut. Blaney, however, fought his way through without losing a man and aided in driving off the attacking force, which Lieut. Campbell had successfully resisted for over an hour, although the insurgents were far superior in numbers.

At daybreak Captain Steward sent out scouting detachments Lieut. Campbell and Lieut. Spurlock to proceed toward San Nicholas in which direction the enemy had withdrawn. On his way Lieut. Campbell had two fights with the insurgents in water waist deep. The enemy lost five killed.

The entire series of encounters resulted without loss to the garrison. Brig. Gen'l Hare commanding the department and battalion and regimental commanders all telegraphed their congratulations to the officers and men of the garrison. Captain Steward issued the following order:

"The Commanding Officer extends his hearty congratulations to the officers and men of this command for their persistent coolness and courage in resisting the enemy's determined attack."

The attack on Las Pinas was begun at an early hour of extreme darkness, by a superior force, from various directions simultaneously, and lasted more than five hours. Five times did the enemy attempt to enter the town and each time was he vigorously repulsed.

The spirit displayed by the men, their promptness in falling in, their ready obedience to orders, and their coolness under fire, are worthy of honorable mention and a credit to American soldiers. Lieut. Campbell and the men at the outpost at Zapote Bridge who bravely and successfully resisted a hostile force which far outnumbered their own and which attacked them from various directions with determined vigor, are worthy of like honorable mention for their valor.

Worthy of the same honorable mention are Lieut. Blaney and the men with him who proceeded from Las Pinas to Zapote Bridge under a hot fire, fighting their way through to the outpost and aiding in driving off the attacking force.

(Signed): F. R. STEWARD,
Capt, 49th Inf. U. S. V.,
Commanding.

This whole affair—the issuing of the necessary orders, the carrying out of the orders, the disposition of the troops and the actual fighting—was conducted solely by colored officers in command of colored troopers, not a single white

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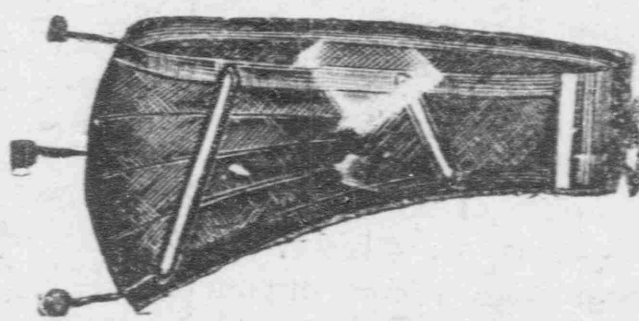
man had the smallest share in it, and its successful outcome furnishes an additional refutation of the charge that Negro soldiers are dependent on white officers.

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